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AUTISM

P.G.Sem-2

Psychology

Paper- CC-7

(Psychopathology)

AUTISM

- ▶ Autism is a serious developmental disorder of childhood characterized by an inability to relate socially.
- ▶ Leo Kanner an eminent mental health specialist who first introduced the word in 1943.
- ▶ Autism derived from the Greek word 'Autos' meaning self.

Characteristics

- ▶ The most important symptoms of autistic child as described by Kanner is aloneness. The autistic infant is unable to respond in a normal way to his/her parents.
- ▶ Autistic child is lack of communication skills, mainly language problem.
- ▶ Emotional relationships with others are either totally absent or severely impaired.

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- ▶ Autistic children engage in repetitive body movements.
- ▶ More interested in non-living objects.
- ▶ A very common symptom of autism is that the speech is either lost later on or never acquired at all. This shows failure of speech development beyond a level.
- ▶ Avoidance of eye contact or poor eye contact.

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- ▶ Kanner reported that autistic children are afraid of loud noises such as the sounds made by loudspeakers, traffic horns , or whistle of the pressure cooker.
- ▶ Abnormal Body posturing or facial expressions.
- ▶ Lack of understanding social cues.
- ▶ Not engaging in play with peers.

Causes of autism

- ▶ Autism is primarily caused by parental distance and aloofness. The parents of autistic children are generally passive about social relations.
- ▶ The failure of close mother-child attachment in early years of development causes the child's inability to develop language and to have social interaction.

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- ▶ Neurological abnormalities caused by brain damage have been found to be closely associated with autism.
- ▶ 75 per cent of autistic children have been found to be mentally retarded. But autism and mental retardation are not synonymous.

management

- ▶ Development of regular routine
- ▶ Positive reinforcement to teach self care skills
- ▶ Speech therapy or sign language teaching
- ▶ Social skills training has demonstrated short-term improvement in social skills and emotional recognition in school-aged children.
- ▶ Parent training and education programs improve language skills and decrease disruptive behaviour.